

REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claims 1 – 10, 12 – 16, and 18 – 20 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,183,038 to Hansen *et al.* Specifically, the Examiner stated:

“It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the vehicle of Hansen *et al.* (6183038) an aircraft since it is a mere obvious application the door panel of Hansen *et al.* (6183038) to that of an aircraft door, and the color is an obvious choice.”

Hansen *et al.* teaches a door panel having a carrier 20 and an insert 24, which is made of fabric, cloth, vinyl, Thermal Plastic Polyolifin, leather, or carpet. Hansen *et al.*, col. 2, lns. 57 – 62. The insert 24 is bonded to the carrier 20. Hansen *et al.*, col. 2, lns. 62 – 64. The insert 24 of Hansen *et al.* includes a concave surface between the portion of the insert that supports the arm of a user and the vertical plane. See Figure 3 of Hansen *et al.* Hansen *et al.* also teaches a door trim substrate 34 that conforms to the shape of the carrier 20. Hansen *et al.*, col. 3, lns. 35 – 40.

The armrest of Hansen *et al.* teaches bonding a covering (insert 24) to a concave surface of the carrier 20. The bonding of coverings to such concave surfaces is one of the problems that Applicant’s invention was specifically designed to solve. Such a concave surface is difficult, *i.e.*, expensive, to cover with a material. Further, the covering of such a concave surface often detaches and detracts from the aesthetics of the armrest when the armrest is used. As Applicant stated in the Background of Applicant’s Specification:

“[T]he [prior art] armrest 100 is difficult to cover with an aesthetically pleasing covering such as leather. As shown in Figure 1C, the interface between the rear surface 140 and the lower surface 150 creates a concave surface 160 with a small radius. It is difficult to cover the concave surface 160 with an aesthetically pleasing covering such as leather because of the small radius of the concave surface 160. As users of the aircraft utilize the armrest 100, the covering over the concave surface 160 can detach from the concave surface 160. Such a detachment significantly detracts from the aesthetics of the armrest.” (emphasis added, pg. 2, ln. 18 – pg. 3, ln. 2)

Claim 1, as amended, now includes a requirement that the outer surface of the armrest not include a “concave surface between the portion of the outer surface that supports the arm of the aircraft pilot or passenger and a vertical plane.” As a result, there is no need for a manufacturer of the armrest assembly of claim 1 to expend significant effort to attach a covering to a concave surface just above the portion of the armrest that supports the arm of the aircraft pilot or passenger. In addition, a user utilizing such an armrest assembly is not likely to pull the covering off of such a concave surface and create an unsightly void under the covering.

Applicant submits that claim 1, as amended, overcomes the Examiner’s rejection. Similarly, claims 2 – 10, 12 – 16, and 18 –20, which depend from claim 1, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

The Examiner rejected claims 5 and 6 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,183,038 to Hansen *et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,015,516 to Clark or U.S. Patent No. 4,456,644 to Janz *et al.* Specifically, the Examiner stated:

“It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the armrest of Hansen et al (6183038) with a pad as taught by Clark (3015516) or Janz et al (4456644) since it is more comfortable.”

As the Examiner correctly indicates, both Clark and Janz teach armrest pads that provide comfort to an armrest user. However, as discussed above, independent claim 1, as amended, is believed to be allowable over Hansen *et al.* Thus, claims 5 and 6, which depend from claim 1, are likewise believed to be allowable.

The Examiner rejected claims 11 and 17 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,183,038 to Hansen *et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,904,002 to Emerling. Specifically, the Examiner stated:

“It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide finger recess in the armrest of Hansen et al. as taught by Emerling.”

As the Examiner correctly indicates, Emerling teaches a finger recess in an armrest. However, as discussed above, independent claim 1, as amended, is believed to be allowable over

Hansen *et al.* Thus, claims 11 and 17, which depend from claim 1, are likewise believed to be allowable.

Applicant has added two new claims, claims 21 and 22, which depend from claim 1. Because Applicant believes that claim 1, as amended, is allowable, Applicant believes that claims 21 and 22 are likewise allowable.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By Hoyt A. Fleming III
Hoyt A. Fleming III
Registration No. 41752

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Address correspondence to: <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> <i>Customer Number or Bar Code Label</i> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">28422</div>	or <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Correspondence Address Below</i> Park, Vaughan & Fleming LLP P.O. Box 140678 Boise, ID 83714	Direct telephone calls to: Hoyt A. Fleming III (208) 336-5237
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